

ABC - Good Morning America  
Wed - 21 Sept. 77

Rona Barrett

"In an immediate follow-up to our report yesterday morning that the CIA is purchasing disco-vision units manufactured by MCA Universal and the Phillips Corporation, ~~the~~ that Agency's Herbert Hetu returned our call to confirm two units were indeed already installed in the CIA's eastern offices. Mr. Hetu's explained the Agency was experimenting with them saying the disc's immediate retrieval of information was what he called a big bonus for us. We did have our numbers wrong yesterday. Mr. Hetu pointed out that five additional units were now on order for a total of seven. That we point out is seven more than the total stated by Wasserman, Chairman of MCA Universal who called our story absolutely ludicrous when we called to confirm. Wasserman reported flatly that the Central Intelligence Agency was positively not purchasing a single disco-vision unit. In a way he was right; they bought seven so far."

GOOD MORNING AMERICA, 20 September 1977

Rona Barrett

Having devoted two hours yesterday to the 30th Anniversary of the CIA, it is interesting to note we now have confirmed that the long-awaited first production models of disco-vision, manufactured by MCA Universal and the European-based Phillips Corporation have arrived in this country, only to be requisitioned by the Central Intelligence Agency. Originally intended as display samples around the country, the first 50 units are earmarked for the CIA's immediate use. As to why they'd want them at all we're told that the amount of knowledge that could be put on the disco-vision disc would make the unit invaluable to an operation such as the CIA. Telephone calls to CIA's Director, Admiral Stansfield Turner and his Assistant, Herbert Hetu, were not returned and we have thus far been unable to reach them for further comment about the purchase for its seemingly extreme urgency.

1076-77

PPG-77-0069  
17 March 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Falkiewicz  
Assistant to the Director

STAT FROM :   
Chief, Publications & Presentations  
Group, DDI

VIA : Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT : The MCA-Philips Videodisc

1. The attached article from the Washington Post of 20 February 1977 was the first of a two-part series on the Music Corporation of America. In the article the Chairman of the Board acknowledged that MCA had a contract to supply videodisc players and videodiscs to CIA. (The Wall Street Journal had carried, in December 1976, a rather bland, unspecific statement that MCA had a contract with a "government agency.")

2. MCA will give a public demonstration in Washington on 30 March of the "industrial" version of the videodisc player, on the occasion of the annual convention of the National Association of Broadcasters. Because the videodisc has attracted a great deal of public attention (particularly given the RCA-MCA disc rivalry and the MCA-Sony disc/tape player competition), it may well be that this demonstration--and the article in the Post--will evoke press queries.

3. The contract in question involves two players built for the Office of Research and Development (the contracting component) and two discs that present and supplement an unclassified dummy of the National Intelligence Daily as an experimental project. The disc has been labeled Official Use Only; the material on the discs is unclassified, but does include copyrighted material, as

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well as some substantive commentary that could be misinterpreted by the press. For these reasons, we refused MCA's low-key request to use the two CIA discs at its public demonstration.

4. We suggest that if queried you could acknowledge that:

a. The Agency has received a couple of the industrial players as well as several discs which constitute an experiment with methods for organizing, storing, retrieving, and displaying information and finished intelligence.

b. That we are using these to assess and evaluate various applications of the videodisc system, particularly those taking advantage of its random access capability.

c. That, as yet, we have made no final determinations on such applications.

5. Should you wish a demonstration, we can give you one at fairly short notice.

Attachment:  
Post article



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